

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the present application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

The April 21, 2004 Office Action and the Examiner's comments have been carefully considered. In response, claims are cancelled, amended and added, and remarks are set forth below in a sincere effort to place the present application in form for allowance. The amendments are supported by the application as originally filed. Therefore, no new matter is added.

SPECIES ELECTION

In the Office Action the Examiner sets forth the election of species requirement which was orally presented to Applicants' attorney on April 6, 2004. During an April 12, 2004 telephonic interview, Applicants' attorney advised the Examiner that Applicants elect Species One corresponding to Figs. 1-3 and that claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8-10 and 12 are readable on the elected species. Applicant confirms the species election set forth in the Office Action.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner's indication that claims 3, 5 and 10 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but

would be allowable if rewritten in independent form is acknowledged and appreciated.

In response, claims 3, 5 and 10 are written in independent form to place these claims in condition for immediate allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

In the Office Action, claims 1, 6, 8, 9 and 12 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art (figures 17, 18A-18D) in view of JP 358031669A (Miyata et al.) in view of USP 5,162,644 (Nagata et al.).

In response, claim 1 is cancelled, the dependency of claims 6 and 8 is changed from "1" to -- 3 -- in view of the cancellation of claim 1 and the amendment of claim 3 to be in independent form. Claim 9 is amended to include limitations from claim 5 which was indicated as including allowable subject matter. Therefore, claim 9, as amended, patentably defines over the art of record and is form for immediate allowance. In view of the asserted allowability of claim 9, claim 12 which is dependent on claim 9 is also allowable over the prior art of record.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, each of the claims which were rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC 103 has been addressed in this Amendment.

FURTHER CLAIM AMENDMENTS

In order to place this application in form for allowance, additional amendments have been made to the present application as follows. The dependency of claims 2, 4 and 6-8 has been changed from "1" to -- 3 --. Since claims 2, 4 and 6-8 are dependent on and further define and limit a claim which is in form for allowance, claims 2, 4 and 6-8 should also be allowed.

New claims 20-33 are added to the present application. Claims 20-25 are dependent on claim 5 and further define and limit the invention recited in amended claim 5. Claims 20-25 respectively correspond to the subject matter of previously unamended claims 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8.

Claims 26 and 27 are added to the present application. Claims 26 and 27 are dependent on claim 10 and correspond to the subject matter of claims 12 and 13 respectively.

Claim 28 is added and is dependent on claim 27. Claim 28 corresponds to the subject matter of claim 14.

Claim 29 is added and is dependent on claim 28. Claim 29 corresponds to the subject matter of claim 15.

Claims 30-33 are added and are dependent on claim 29.
Claims 30-33 correspond to the subject matter of claims 16-19
respectively.

Since claims 2, 4, 7, 11, 13-19 and 20-33 are dependent on
one of claims 3, 5, 9 and 10, and further define and limit the
inventions defined by claims 3, 5, 9 and 10, these dependent
claims should be considered and allowed with independent claims
3, 5, 9 and 10.

It is respectfully submitted that claims 2-33 are in form
for immediate allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

CLAIM FEE

Submitted herewith is a check in the amount of \$302.00 for
the addition of one (1) independent claim and twelve (12) total
claims above the highest number of independent and total claims
for which payment was previously made. If any additional fees
are due or if any overpayment has been made, please charge or
credit our Deposit Account No. 06-1378 for such sum.

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Appln. No. 09/639,041
Amendment dated July 21, 2004
Reply to Office Action of April 21, 2004

Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner disagrees with any of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully requested to point out where there is support for a contrary view.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert P. Michal
Reg. No. 35,614

Frishauf, Holtz, Goodman & Chick, P.C.
767 Third Avenue - 25th Floor
New York, New York 10017-2032
Tel. (212) 319-4900
Fax (212) 319-5101
RPM/ms